

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Status

Claims 1, 3-15 and 17-20 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 3, 5-15 and 17-20 have been rejected. Claims 1 and 15 are herein amended. Claims 3 and 4 are herein canceled. New claim 21 is added. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 3, 15 and 17-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,408,197 (Miyake) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,923,028 (Turnbull) and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,504,409 (Laletin). Claims 1, 5, 6-9 and 11-14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art (APA), FIG. 2 of the present application, in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,494,551 and Laletin.

Applicants respectfully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claim 4 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have essentially incorporated the features of claim 4 into independent claims 1 and 15 to place claims 1 and 15 and the claims which depend therefrom in condition for allowance.

New Claim 21

New claim 21 has been added to further clarify the delay component of claim 1 and is believed to be allowable for at least the reasons stated above.

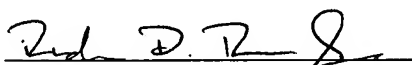
Dependent Claims

Applicants have not independently addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because Applicants submit that, in view of the amendments to the claims presented herein and, for at least similar reasons as why the independent claims from which the dependent claims depend are believed allowable as discussed, *supra*, the dependent claims are also allowable. Applicants however, reserve the right to address any individual rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary or appropriate.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claims as herein presented are allowable over the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, and that the respective rejections be withdrawn. Applicants further submit that the application is hereby placed in condition for allowance which action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Richard D. Ratchford Jr.
Reg. No. 53,865
Attorney for Applicant(s)

F. CHAU & ASSOCIATES, LLC
130 Woodbury Rd.
Woodbury, New York 11797
Tel: (516) 692-8888
FAX: (516) 692-8889